



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE REGULAR
MEETING OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
HELD IN ROOM 739
OF THE KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012**

Monday, June 20, 2011

10:00 AM

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Curry, Vice Chair Olivas, Vice Chair Savelle, Commissioner Berger, Commissioner Biondi, Commissioner Franzen, Commissioner Kang, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Sorkin, Commissioner Trevino-Powell and Commissioner Williams

Excused: Vice Chair Friedman, Commissioner Kleinberg, Commissioner McClaney and Commissioner Rudnick

1. Call to order. (11-2862)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:09 a.m.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

2. Introduction of June 20, 2011 meeting attendees. (11-2863)

Self-introductions were made.

3. Approval of the agenda of June 20, 2011. (11-2864)

On motion of Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Sorkin (Commissioners, Friedman, Kleinberg, McClaney, and Rudnick being absent), the agenda for June 20, 2011, was approved.

4. Approval of the minutes of June 6, 2011. (11-2865)

On motion of Commissioner Savelle, seconded by Commissioner Sorkin (Commissioners, Friedman, Kleinberg, McClaney, and Rudnick being absent), the minutes for June 6, 2011, were approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

5. Chair's Report by Patricia Curry, Chair, for June 20, 2011. (11-2866)

Chair Curry reported the following:

- **Staff is contacting Commissioners who must complete the AB 1234 Ethics Training. This training may be completed online, or through an instructor-led course. Staff may be contacted to schedule for the instructor-led course.**
- **The 16th Annual Awards Dinner and Fundraiser, "All For The Love of Kids" will be held on Thursday, August 4th, 2011 at the LA County Arboretum and Botanic Garden in Arcadia.**
- **The Commission will take a different approach to complete the 2010-11 Annual Report; discussions with Committee Chairs regarding this year's process are forthcoming.**

Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.

6. Discussion and approval of a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department Ombudsman Ombudsmen. (11-2890)

Commissioner Biondi made a recommendation that the letter be amended to also include that the Los Angeles County Probation Ombudsman position currently within the Probation Department be transferred and that said ombudsman position report to an independent entity outside of the Probation Department.

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Biondi, and by common consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Friedman, Kleinberg, McClaney, and Rudnick being absent), the Commission approved the letter to the Board of Supervisors as amended.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[SUPPORTING DOCUMENT- Revised Letter](#)

IV. PRESENTATIONS

7. Update on Youth Self-Sufficiency

Chief Executive Office

Carrie Miller, Acting Manager
Service Integration Branch

Department of Children and Family Services

Harvey Kawasaki, Division Chief
Youth Development Services

Probation Department

Michael Verner, Director
Youth Development Services ILTP/TILP (11-2871)

Ms. Miller, Mr. Kawasaki and Mr. Verner reported the following:

- **The concept of self-sufficiency has existed for a number of years, it wasn't until a motion by Supervisor Antonovich (Agenda Item No. 6 of March 2, 2010) that directed the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Probation, Public Social Services, Community and Senior Services, Mental Health, the Community Development Commission and other affected departments, to establish the fourth child welfare outcome goal of "self-sufficiency." As a result of said motion, a Self-Sufficiency Committee (Committee) was convened that was comprised of key advocates, stakeholders, County departments, Board Offices and former foster youth.**
- **The Committee recognized that self-sufficiency should begin the moment a youth enters the child welfare system, and that DCFS needs the collaboration of other County departments in order to achieve "self-sufficiency" for youth.**
- **On December 7, 2010 (Agenda Item No. 3) the Board, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich established "Youth Self-Sufficiency" as a countywide goal.**
- **The Committee developed an Integrated Service Delivery Model for Children and Youth, ages 0-24. The model includes a conceptual overview and a 55 point action plan which includes collaboration by several County departments. This model identifies the following four**

key areas that are needed to achieve self-sufficiency: 1) Permanency/Housing, 2) Education, 3) Career/Workforce Development, and 4) Social/Emotional Well-Being.

- **The Committee meets every other month, and four additional sub-groups also meet to address the specifics with the integrated service delivery model.**
- **Items within the model are short term actions that are currently underway in some capacity and will be achieving full implementation by November 2011.**
- **Under this model, DCFS has ten action items and each item has a lead manager. Additionally, DCFS plans to designate a lead manager for each action item where there is a DCFS connection to another department.**
- **Although AB 12 is not included in the current model because AB 12 requires DCFS to have a plan in place for implementation before January 1, 2012, as directed in Supervisor Antonovich's motion of December 7, 2010 (Agenda Item No. 3).**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Mr. Kawasaki and Mr. Verner added the following:

- **Most colleges and universities in California have recently revised their policies to allow students to remain within the dorms or student housing during holidays and breaks. Furthermore, there have been discussions with colleges and universities on the need to create foster care liaisons to offer support to youth. Independent Living Program Chafee funds are available to cover transportation costs for youth's travel in an effort to support youth in getting connected.**
- **The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) will provide DCFS and Probation the opportunity to improve outcomes, to better track and identify DCFS and Probation youth progress.**
- **Tracking should be taking place via the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) portion that covers Independent Living Program (ILP).**
- **AB 12 will allow DCFS to maintain contact for those youth who want to remain in the system after turning 18.**

- There are preliminary statistics on the number of youth participating in the Integrated Service Delivery Model; however numbers are not yet available. DCFS, however, does have the number of youth utilizing Chafee funds. Information on both programs will be forwarded to the Commission. Additionally the data given to the Commission will identify the number of youth each County department serves.
- In light of the recent allegations against a Probation Officer accused of stealing money from youth, the Probation Department is implementing a corrective action plan to ensure that there are no similar cases. The Auditor-Controller's office is currently investigating the alleged theft. As a result of the corrective action plan, DCFS is mailing statement ledgers directly to youth, and in June 2011, the Auditor-Controller mailed a special statement with instructions to youth on how to review the statement ledgers carefully. Additionally, youth were provided with contact information should they have any questions or concerns regarding the statements. All questions and concerns are no longer directed to the case manager, but are instead referred to a Youth Development Services Manager in DCFS. Furthermore all youth who were missing money have been reimbursed.
- The Probation Department is working with the Alliance for Children's Rights to review cases where assessment for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for youth in the Juvenile Halls was not done in a timely manner.
 - Mr. Dave Mitchell, Chief, Juvenile Institutions Placement Services Bureau, Probation stated that the process for SSI takes approximately 18 months to complete.
 - Ms. Lara Holtzman, Alliance for Children Rights stated that California State law mandates that foster youth who are nearing emancipation be assessed for potential SSI eligibility when the foster youth reaches at least 16 years and 6 months of age, and not older than 17 years and 6 months of age.
 - The Self-Sufficiency workgroup will review the process for assessing SSI eligibility for foster youth and report back to the Commission.
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently announced a grant opportunity entitled, Child Welfare - Education

System Collaborations to Increase Educational Stability. The Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC) in coordination with various County Departments and key stakeholders will be applying for this grant.

The Update on Youth Self-Sufficiency was received and filed.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT \(CEO\)](#)

- 8.** Update on the Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project by Dr. Jackie Contreras, Acting Director, DCFS and Roundtable Discussion with Commissioners and Community Representatives. (11-2874)

The following speakers were present for the roundtable discussion:

DCFS

**Dr. Jackie Contreras, Acting Director
Rhelda Shabazz, Executive Deputy Director
Cynthia McCoy-Miller, Administrative Deputy
Alan Weisbart, Children's Services Administrator II
Probation
Dave Mitchell, Chief Juvenile Placement Bureau Services**

Alliance for Children's Rights

Lara Holtzman, Esq. Managing Attorney

Community Coalition

Joseph Devall, Kinship Director

Ms. Shabazz, Ms. McCoy-Miller, Mr. Weisbart and Mr. Mitchell reported that beginning in July 2007, the County's child welfare and juvenile probation systems began implementation of the five-year Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project to improve services and community support by engaging and involving children and families in a more individualized, preventative approach to achieve improved child safety, increased permanency, reduced reliance on out-of-home care and child/family well-being.

The presenters provided the commission with written correspondence.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, the presenters added the following:

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- **Approximately 12.5 percent of youth within the Probation Department go from group homes to juvenile camps. In addition, youth transitioning from a group home to a juvenile camp is considered reentry following an exit from Probation.**
 - **Placement stability refers to youth who have had two or less placements within 18 months.**
 - **The State of California (State) has agreed to provide a share to cover the Group Home Rate increase; however, the Federal government has not yet approved DCFS' request to adjust the Title IV-E Waiver (Waiver). The \$33.2 million Group Home Rate increase is shared by the County and the Federal Government. The County is responsible for \$15.1 million of the Waiver, the Federal government is responsible for \$18.2 million, and the State's share is \$16.3 million.**
 - **Investment costs for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11 are approximately \$18 million and the remaining balance is \$38 million. However, that amount may increase to \$57 million if the Federal government agrees to cover the Group Home Rate increase.**
 - **DCFS has had discussions on how to invest the remaining \$38 million. One of the areas discussed was reentry rates. DCFS recognizes that reunification rates have increased leading to higher reentry rates. DCFS is also looking at reducing caseloads.**
 - **DCFS will review all possible internal strategies prior to utilizing reinvestment dollars. DCFS will consider funding with reinvestment dollars in the following areas:**
 - **Caseload reduction**
 - **Aftercare funding for visitation centers and family resource centers.**
 - **Expanding Youth Permanency (YP) units**
 - **Partnering with County department on Self-Sufficiency**
 - **Increasing Prevention Initiatives Demonstration Project (PDIP) funding for FY 2011-12**
 - **Foster Home Rate Increase**
 - **Family Team Decision Making**
 - **Upfront Assessment/Family Preservation**
 - **Promoting Safe and Stable Families**
 - **Unavoidable Costs Increase**
 - **Probation Program**
 - **Support for Relative Care Providers/Kinship**

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- **Contracts for Alternative Services for Youth will no longer be funded by DCFS.**

Ms. Holtzman reported that the Alliance for Children's Rights has had some concerns regarding both ends of the process of the child protective process and posed the following questions to DCFS:

- **What kinds of services are being provided to families at the front end to ensure they are being connected to appropriate services?**
- **What kinds of services are being provided to families once they are reunified?**
- **What kinds of ongoing services are being provided to youth who remain in the system beyond two years?**
- **Are any reinvestment dollars being spent on relative caregivers?**

Ms. Shabazz responded by indicating that DCFS has had discussion to include support for relative caregivers using Waiver dollars.

Mr. Devall expressed concern with the reduction in the PIDP dollars from the current FY 2010-11 to FY 2011-12, and posed the following questions regarding support for relative caregivers:

- **What kind of mental health support is in place for children and their families?**
- **Youth who are diverted from the system and do not have an open case, would they receive up-front assessments?**

Mr. Weisbart responded by indicating that the goal of PIDP was to have the community eventually take on its cost, thus the reductions in funding for subsequent years. Unfortunately, the grant funding has not been available to the level DCFS had expected. Mr. Weisbart noted that all of the funding options for the Waiver reinvestment dollars are projections. In addition, the up-front assessments are linked to alternative response services.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Dr. Contreras, Ms. Shabazz, Ms. McCoy-Miller, Mr. Weisbart and Mr. Mitchell added the following:

- **The Family Preservation goal is to create a lead agency to help families connect to resources within their communities that are outside of the funded contractors that DCFS has.**

- **DCFS has not conducted a study on the non-contracted community networks.**

Mr. Mitchell added the following:

- **1,684 youth represent youth that are currently placed.**
- **Probation has reduced the number of AWOL youth from 450 to 250 partially due to the aftercare program and engaging the family.**
- **23 deputies were converted to Functional Family Probation (FFP) and 15 deputies were converted to Functional Family Therapy (FFT).**
- **The average length of stay for youth in group homes has been reduced from 391 to 290 and those figures take into account youth who are in programs that require an 18 month stay.**

In response to the inquiry by the Commission on the strategies that the Probation Department has for the upcoming FY, Mr. Mitchell added that Probation plans to:

- **Increase the FFT slots;**
- **Increase the FFP supervision model;**
- **Increase the Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) slots; and**
- **Increase the Permanency Unit**

In response to the Commission's concern about the lack of funding coordination between DCFS and First 5LA, Mr. Weisbart indicated that the initial \$6 million funding was divided between Differential Response and PIDP.

Mr. Devall indicated that the Community Coalition has models of the programs they would like DCFS to review. Specifically, the Kinship Resource Center in the North County is inaccessible and the program available does not address the needs of the community it is supposed to support.

Dr. Contreras added that the Waiver allows DCFS use dollars flexibly and that DCFS must review the strategies it already has in place and determine if they are working effectively. However, she noted that unfortunately, DCFS does not have the quality outcome data in many of the strategies.

Dr. Contreras thanked the Commission and encouraged Commissioners to forward any ideas or plans they may have.

The roundtable discussion was received and filed.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

- 9.** DCFS Acting Director's Report by Dr. Jackie Contreras, Acting Director, DCFS. (11-2867)

There was no discussion or action taken.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

- 10.** Matters not on the posted agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (11-2875)

There were none.

- 11.** Announcements for the meeting of June 20, 2011. (11-2876)

There were none.

Public Comment

- 12.** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (11-2877)

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

- 13.** Adjournment for the meeting of June 20, 2011. (11-2878)

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.